



The majority of neighbors rated the impact of the Ravenna Cottages positively. It is the only cottage development yet constructed through the Demonstration Program.



A carriage unit kitchen.



The living room of one of the cottages.

Ravenna Cottages

Site Address: 6318 5th Ave NE

Zoning: Single Family 5000

Neighborhood Impact Survey Results

28%	27%	45%
Bad	Neutral	Good

Project Overview

The Ravenna Cottages project in the Green Lake neighborhood demonstrates the Demonstration Program's Cottage "Type B" category—cottages with carriage units. Carriage units are essentially small cottages above garages, and in the case of Ravenna Cottages, the carriages share common walls. Carriage units were allowed at a ratio of one per every two cottages.

Six cottages line two sides of a courtyard that is fenced and gated from the street. At the back of the courtyard sits three carriage units accessible by an exterior stairway. Below the carriage units, nine garages line the alley.

The Ravenna Cottages used details to their fullest advantage, including trellises and Craftsman-style finishes, trim and window details reminiscent of other homes in the neighborhood. A palette of compatible colors was used to identify each cottage.

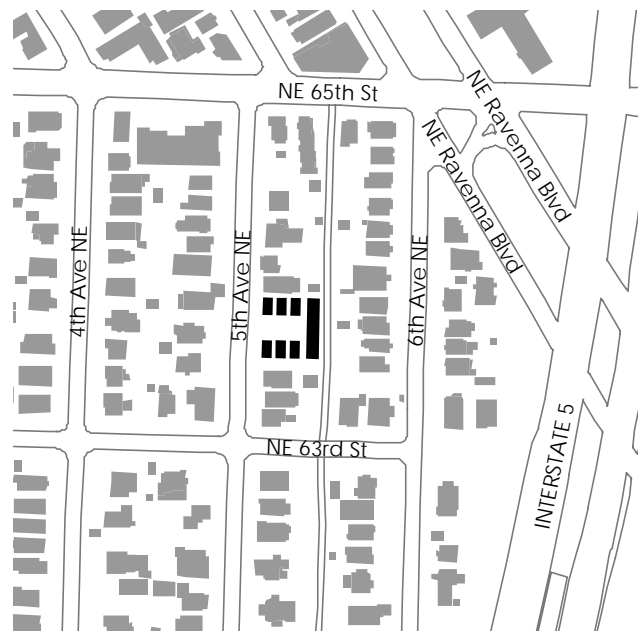
Process Evaluation

Application Excerpt

"Currently very few, if any, two bedroom houses are being developed in Seattle. This project will provide diversity as well as the most affordable product in the neighborhood."



Ravenna Cottages includes porches along the streetfront.



Demonstration Program Selection

This project was selected as a "should be built" in the 1999 AIA Design Demonstration Project competition. DCLU received only one letter of opposition during the comment period required for the Demonstration Program, and the applicant included signatures from several people that were supportive of the project in their original Demonstration Program application.

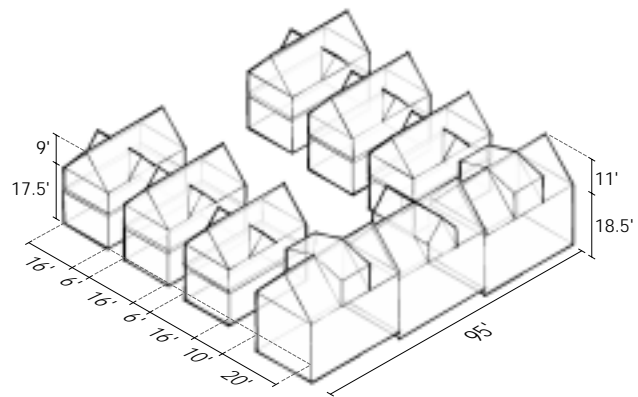
Development Standard Departures

This project went through the full Design Review Board process. Through this process, the following design departures were allowed:

The density of cottages allowed by the Land Use Code is one dwelling unit per one thousand six hundred (1,600) square feet of lot area. The Demonstration Program allowed up to 50% more density (one unit per 1,067 ft²) if carriage units above garages are provided. The project proposes nine dwelling units on 10,500 ft² of lot area, or one unit per 1,167 ft².

The project was granted a departure for lot coverage of 45.5%, or 580 square feet over the allowed coverage. The maximum lot coverage is typically forty percent (40%) for cottages. This departure allows on-site, secure garages for nine units. For vehicle security and aesthetics, garages are preferable to open parking or car ports.

The second story of any cottage is limited to fifty percent of the floor area of the ground

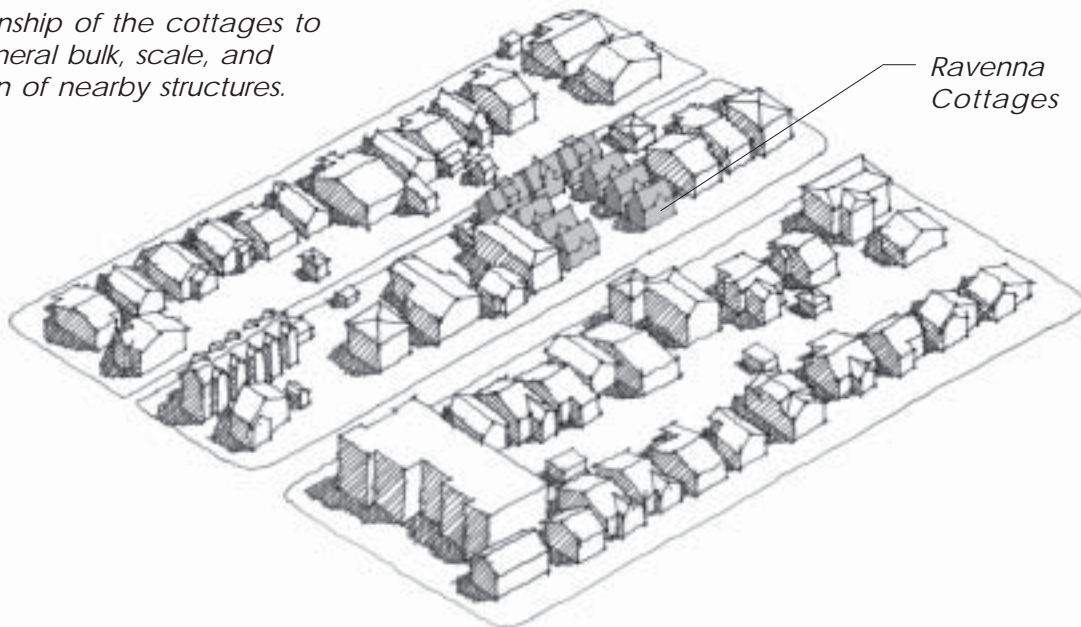


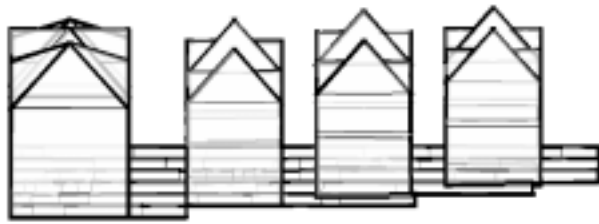
This drawing illustrates the dimensions of Ravenna Cottages.

floor. The project was granted a departure to allow floors one and two to be comparable in area (approximately 460 ft²). This allows a more functional and livable home with two bedrooms and 1.5 bathrooms.

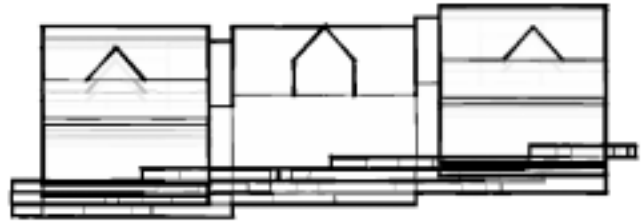
The project was also granted a departure from code requirements to provide open space dimensions smaller than the minimum required. Cottage Housing Development typi-

Relationship of the cottages to the general bulk, scale, and location of nearby structures.





North Elevation



West Elevation

cally requires 400 sq. ft. of landscaped open space per unit, a minimum of 200 ft² usable, private open space, and a minimum of 150 ft² of common open space.

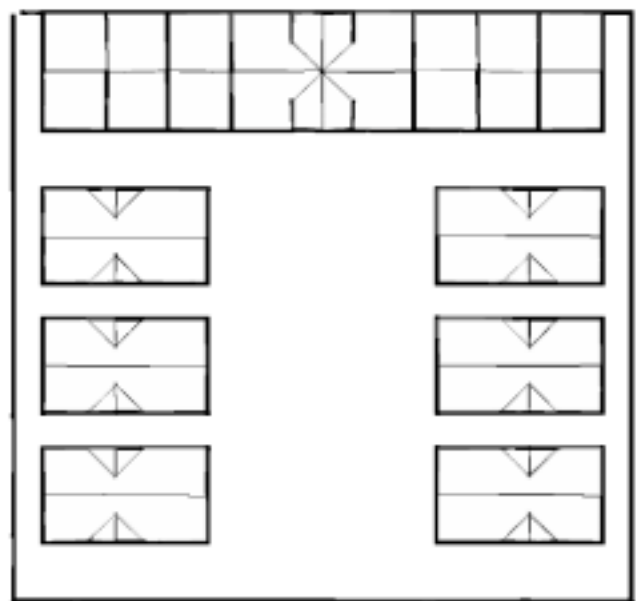
This is an intimately-scaled cottage development that provides a variety of community spaces. The scale of individual decks provided resembles balconies to reserve site area for central, shared spaces. Open space is concentrated in a highly landscaped courtyard of 1,624 square feet and a landscaped front yard (352 ft²) for a total of 1,976 square feet. These areas have seating, arbors, and a water feature.

Application of Design Guidelines

In the review of Ravenna Cottages, the Design Review Board provided design guidance to help the project meet the intent of the Citywide Design Guidelines.

In general, the Design Review Board was pleased with the conceptual design and siting of the detached units as they relate to the site and adjacent properties. The Design Guidelines, along with Board guidance given to the applicant during this process, resulted in the following:

- Rooflines were revised and three modulations of height stepping down to the north were made to reduce the appearance of height of the garage/carriage house structure.
- The color of each carriage house was varied to create visual modulation in the facades.



Plan View

- Evergreen and deciduous flowering vines were planted along the alley to create softness and shadow patterns on the walls and garage doors on the lower half of the carriage homes to aid in blending into the neighborhood.
- Siding materials were selected to create a softer edge and more visual variety against the alley.
- The condominium declarations were required to state that the garages could not be used for non-automobile storage, and storage areas were added in a basement structure located under the two northeast cottages to address public

concern regarding the garages' potential use for storage, and subsequent spillover of project-related parking onto 5th Avenue NE.

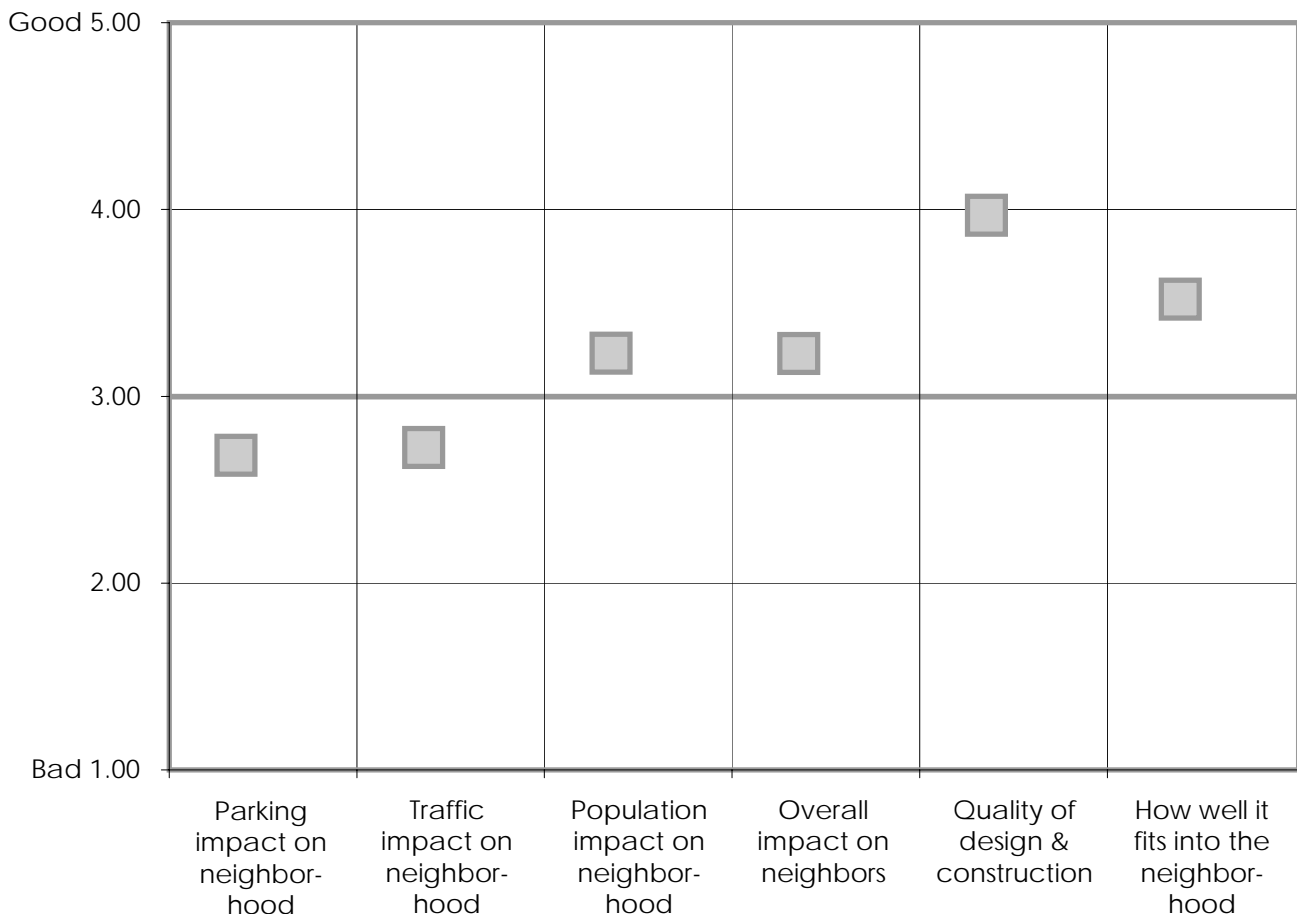
- The architect's design intent drew from existing single family architecture in the vicinity, and from the broader scope of domestic housing styles. Detailing that is present in the existing houses in the neighborhood was used.
- Craftsman-style features and details were used. The cottages have bellybands and varied siding and trim to create interest and visually reduce the height. Roof

surfaces are broken with dormers to add visual interest and to enhance the interior spaces.

- The cottages and carriage homes were designed to share the same materials and detailing and surround an integral landscaped courtyard that provides a central focal point for the cottage development.
- Landscaped courtyard and vine-covered trellises were used to achieve a sense of human scale.
- The courtyard was divided into three distinct areas to create intimate environments.

6318 5th Ave (Ravenna Cottages)
Questionnaire Responses

■ Project Averages



- Landscaping was provided on all sides of the carriage house structure, as well as low level path-style lighting and vehicle lighting to make the area around the proposed carriage house more pedestrian oriented.
- Vines and other landscape materials were placed on the property line side of the south entry path, and a vine-covered trellis over the north access path between the carriage and cottage homes to provide an interesting, intimate entry from the alley.



The cottages surround a common courtyard with trellises.

- A space was provided outside each cottage side door for recycling baskets in a screened utility area accessible to a rear path. For the carriage units, a lattice-screened and secured storage area under the entry stairs was provided for recycling.
- A large basement area under the two northeast cottages was also set aside for garbage and recycling.
- The fence and landscaping on 5th Avenue was designed to reinforce the character of the neighboring properties, and to create an appropriate transition from the public to private realm.

- The common open space was designed to include:
 - An arbor with mailboxes and a covered bench with plantings.
 - A low, picket-style fence encloses the site to provide an open welcoming view into the central courtyard.
 - A special planting and garden feature (birdbath, obelisk or sundial) to create a visual focal point from the sidewalk. This feature also screens the residents' sitting and entertaining areas.
- A large trellis is sited at the rear of the cottages for vines to cover most of the first floor cottage elevation.

Neighborhood Sentiment

What do the neighbors think of this type of housing? Is the number of units an issue with neighbors?

The chart on the previous page shows how this project was rated in the surveys that were sent to neighbors within 300 feet of the project. Comments from the surveys included:

"I heard concerns, at first and before construction, about parking. I live two doors from the development and as yet, have found no concerns with parking."

"Despite the 9 garages built for each unit, they are not being used by most of their owners for parking...other than the serious parking/traffic problem...it is well designed & very pleasing visually."

"This type of housing is excellent."

"Visually very dense looking."

Overall, the majority of survey responses were positive, indicating most neighbors think the project has had a good or neutral impact. On the whole it can be said that neighbors think

well of the project, although some people took issue with the total number of units and the general parking situation in the neighborhood. Because the project was so well designed, it has fewer detractors than it might have otherwise had.

What is the reaction of the residents of the housing in terms of livability of the unit and how it could be improved?

A resident of one of the cottage units wrote:

I have to say living there has been a pleasure. Specifically, the layout is excellent. While there is not much space to work with on the lot, John and his team did a great job of making the common areas feel very open and comfortable, but also neighborly and homey.

The cottage itself is also extremely well thought-out. While small, they are particularly well-designed to make good use of the space. Parking under the carriage houses was an excellent idea, as was using the carriage houses to block freeway noise.

Finally, in regard to the impact on the neighborhood, I feel this was a great addition to the community. As populations swell and real estate becomes more sparse, I believe we will need to find creative ways to increase our supply of housing without cramping the urban lifestyle. In my opinion, the Ravenna cottages succeed in this regard and are a great model for future developments.

Conclusions

What was the cost of construction?

Approximately \$1.6 million.

How did the additional density affect the per unit cost of construction?

The three additional carriage units decreased the per unit costs, perhaps due in part to their lower per square foot cost of construction versus the cottages.

According to the developer, the dollar per square foot construction costs for the cottages reduced from \$236 to \$210 as a result of adding the carriage units. The average construction cost per unit also dropped about 11% when the carriages were included.

Does the additional density result in more affordable units?

Because the carriage units had a lower per square footage cost of construction and sold for a lesser per square foot price, they did result in more affordable units than only six cottages likely would have.

What were the positive results of this project? What were the negative results?

Overall, the Ravenna Cottages project is a success, given how the neighborhood sentiment about it has evolved since the idea's inception. Aside from the parking and traffic issues cited above, the size of the project, specifically along the alley side where the carriage units are located, may have influenced some survey respondents who feel that the development is too dense.



Ravenna Cottages uses a subtle variety of complementary colors to help minimize its visual impact.

Did this project provide a design concept that would likely be applicable and acceptable in other neighborhoods?

The cottages themselves tend to fit in well with their surroundings, particularly in terms of scale (building height and widths) and with complementary roof pitches. The street-facing facades are somewhat sparse, due to the repetition in cottage design, but fortunately trellises are present to soften them. More or larger windows and modulating colors or materials along the street could have helped. Further, while the upper story bulk of the individual cottages tends to make them read more as detached townhouses and less like the stereotypical “cottage” design, the overall design works due to clever trim positioning and the placement of trellises and plantings. The varying complementary colors of the cottages also limit their visual impact.

The cottage designs could be acceptable in a broad segment of Seattle’s neighborhoods. The addition of carriage units may be less acceptable.

Lessons Learned

Successes and issues raised by this project include:

- requirements or guidelines for complementing scale and materials of cottages to the adjacent homes;
- limits on the upper-story floor area, height, and scale of cottages;
- landscape requirements for cottages; and
- whether carriage units should be allowed in addition to cottages.

DCLU will address these in a future proposal for cottage housing.



Landscaping and open space are key components of the success of Ravenna Cottages.